

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF MEN**

<http://www.nh.gov/csm>

Minutes for the Thirtieth Commission Meeting

August 25, 2006 1-4 PM

Legislative Office Building Room 206, Concord, NH

These minutes were taken by Scott Garman.

**Members Present:** Joe Mastromarino, Scott Garman, Michael Geanoulis, Stephen Gorin, Marshall Hickok, David Lauren, Gus Lerandeanu.

Steve Gorin acted as Chair temporarily until Joe Mastromarino arrived at the meeting.

Mike Geanoulis motioned to accept the July meeting minutes, and Scott Garman seconded.

Marshall Hickok arrived and announced that he had spoken with Joe Mastromarino on the phone, and that Joe would like Scott Garman to Chair the meeting until his arrival. Joe also requested that the July minutes not be adopted until he arrives.

Scott Garman acted as Chair temporarily until Joe Mastromarino arrived at the meeting.

**Wade Horn Invitation:**

Mike Geanoulis felt that greater exposure of the importance of biological fathers is needed, and in that spirit contacted the U.S. Administration for Children and Families last month to order some booklets on the importance of fathers in child development. During this phone call, Mike explained his role in the Commission on the Status of Men (CSM) and he was encouraged to apply to invite Wade Horn to speak at a future CSM meeting.

Dr. Horn is the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, which is itself a division of Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Dr. Horn had a lot to do with the publication of the Father Facts booklet, which Mike finds to be an invaluable resource on fatherhood statistics. Dr. Horn is recognized as a national leading expert on the role of fathers. Mike received an application to invite Dr. Horn to a speaking engagement, which he distributed copies to the Commission and asked that we discuss how to fill out the form.

Gus Lerandeanu suggested that before making the invitation, the Commission should find one or more co-sponsors of the event to help ensure a large crowd is drawn. Mike Geanoulis noted that Commissioner John Stephen of DHHS would be a likely supporter of this effort and many employees of NH DHHS would be likely to attend.

Marshall Hickok noted that it is important to make the purpose of the meeting clear that the Commission is investigating issues according to input from its constituency, and that we are addressing these issues in bringing these speakers to our events. He felt that in the past we've done a good job identifying issues with invited speakers, but the focus of getting the right kinds of information out of the presentations has

been more difficult. Further, Marshall feels that our minutes could better reflect the fact that the presentations are being driven by guidance and questioning from the Commission. Marshall feels this is an area that could be improved upon to increase the value of our meetings and minutes to the public.

Marshall suggested that the stated purpose of the meeting be to identify what policies NH can implement to further the goal of bringing fathers and children closer together. He suggested the title of the event could be "Fathers Count," and that it could be held at a high school. David Lauren agreed that an event and venue like this would be very worthwhile.

Scott Garman suggested some apprehension about holding an event about the importance of fathers in front of a student audience, given that so many of them are statistically without involved fathers, and the focus could possibly "open old wounds." Mike Geanoulis also shared this concern.

David Lauren suggested that if the event were to be held at a school, that the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization might be worth contacting for possible co-sponsorship.

Marshall Hickok suggested that a subcommittee be formed to go forward with this idea. Mike Geanoulis will Chair the subcommittee, and Marshall and David Lauren agreed to participate. This will be the Fathers Count Seminar Subcommittee. Mike Geanoulis agreed to try and get in touch with Commissioner Stephen to solidify some collaboration before going forward. The subcommittee will get back to us at the next meeting with the status of this.

Joe Mastromarino arrived at this time and Chaired the meeting.

### **Secretary's Report:**

Joe Mastromarino turned the topic to the July meeting minutes, and suggested that we deal with the first section of the minutes which dealt with the testimony summaries from Dr. Holden and Judge Boyle.

Mike Geanoulis moved to include the text "Mike Geanoulis asked about the possibility of a program for re-connecting fathers with their children." Marshall Hickok seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mike Geanoulis requested to change the wording of "Michael Geanoulis asked" to "suggested" in the final paragraph of the Justice Boyle section.

Marshall Hickok reopened discussion on the format of the minutes to suggest that it be made clearer that the Commission is driving questioning of guest speakers in order to address the needs of our constituents. This could be included in an introductory paragraph.

David Bickford suggested to consider the minutes as a kind of press release. David Lauren then suggested that the Commissioner inviting the speaker be responsible for writing and distributing a media press release for the event.

At 2:30, Gus Lerandeau left due to an appointment.

Marshall Hickok requested that an agenda item be included for the next meeting to decide how to pick the goals and objectives for picking speakers.

Steve Gorin moved to approve the first part of the minutes draft. Scott Garman seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Marshall Hickok moved to strike the second section of the minutes. Mike Geanoulis seconded. A discussion was then had on whether ad-hominem attacks against Commissioners and their defenses belong in the minutes.

David Lauren motioned to include a shorter substitution for the remainder of the minutes. Stephen Gorin seconded it, and the motion failed with a 2-4 vote, with Marshall Hickok, Michael Geanoulis, Joe Mastromarino, and Scott Garman opposed.

The motion to strike the second section of the minutes passed 3-2, with David Lauren and Stephen Gorin opposed, and Scott Garman abstaining.

David Lauren left the meeting at 3:15 due to a prior appointment.

### **Legislative Report:**

David Bickford noted that deadlines for filing bills for this legislative session are coming up. The two windows to submit legislation are September 18 to October 6, and November 15 until December 8. Rep. Bickford would be willing to review and potentially submit legislation recommended by the Commission.